

able to it. In Jamaica it will probably remain confined to the higher altitudes.

Institute of Jamaica, April 13, 1893.

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A REPLY TO PROFESSOR WHEELER.

I think that quite enough has been said on the subject of the *Unio* muddle in the columns of the *NAUTILUS*, and I do not want to revive the subject. But there are one or two suggestive points in Professor Wheeler's note in the May number that I want to call attention to.

While a Congress of American conchologists might be able to settle certain contested points in nomenclature, if their work did not come into too glaring opposition to certain established laws recognized by scientific societies in general, yet I believe it is impossible for any such body to straighten out the muddle of specific limits, or perhaps, in all cases, the relations of one species to another. I believe that an expert, a specialist who has devoted years to the loving study of a family or genus, is better qualified to judge on these points than any body of students, no matter how capable they may be otherwise, but who probably have only a mere smattering of the matter in question.

C. B. Adams and Dr. Gould ranked easily among the ablest conchologists in the world, but who can doubt that Mr. Lea, or James Lewis were better qualified to judge on the nice distinctions of the *Unionidae*, or that Dr. Newcomb was more competent to arrange the *Achatinellas*, or that Dr. Dall has a better knowledge of deep sea Mollusks than did either of these? Because these men have made life studies of these subjects, while the others were not specially interested in them.

A specialist who works on a difficult or puzzling group, goes over his work again and again, putting it aside when he tires of it, and taking it up when the mind is rested. He patiently and lovingly labors over the most minute and obscure points that to most students would be of little or no interest, because his heart is in the work and he is thoroughly determined to master the whole subject. As a rule, his collecting is largely done in the direction of his hobby, and he therefore has more material to work on than one slightly interested. He eagerly reads all literature relating to his work, and in time, if his judgment is well balanced, he becomes an authority.

Now I do not pretend to say that any such person can ever arrive at a point where he never makes mistakes, or where his authority should be taken as absolute, but I do say that he knows at sight and has constantly on his tongue's end much that the ordinary student cannot possibly know or have.

And even when such a specialist publishes the results of his studies they must stand the test of criticism, merciless and searching; they must be subject to all the modifications that will be caused by future discoveries and enlarged knowledge, for it is the naked truth alone that will stand, and not the assertions of any specialist or body of scientists. But I believe that the man who spends years of loving, conscientious labor and study on a subject is better qualified to act as an authority than any body of outsiders.

CHAS. T. SIMPSON.

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CONCHOLOGISTS.

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Since the article in the October NAUTILUS, the following have been admitted as members of the Association:

T. S. Oldroyd, 142 N. Los Angeles St., Los Angeles, Cal. Subject—(not chosen yet).

Wm. H. Myles, 53 Arkledun Ave., Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Subject—Helicidae and Pupidae of Ontario.

A. H. Gardner, P. O. Box 84, Fort Hamilton, Long Island, N. Y. Subject—Land Shells and Fresh-water Univalves of the United States.

Miss S. P. Monks, 305 Bunkerhill Ave., Los Angeles, Cal. Subject—(not chosen yet).

A. G. Wetherby, Magnetic City, Mitchell Co., N. C. Subject—(not chosen yet).

Chas. S. Hodgson, Albion, Ill. Subject—Helicidae.

W. H. Conrad, 11 Bank St., Philadelphia, Pa. Subject—Tertiary Shells.

M. J. Elrod, Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Ill. Subject—(not chosen yet).

Geo. H. Clapp, 116 Water St., Pittsburgh, Pa. Subject—Helicidae.

Members will please note the following changes of addresses since the publication of the list of members: